

Victorian Interior by Horace Pippin

Print Facts

- Medium: Oil on canvas
- Date: 1945
- Size: 25 ¼ x 30 inches
- Location: Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC
- Period:
- Style: Folk Art
- Genre: Interior
- This is a painting of the artist's living room

Artist Facts

- Born February 1888
- Died July 1946 (58 years old)
- Horace Pippin was African-American and attended segregated schools
- His grandparents were slaves, and his parents were domestic workers
- He served in the infantry in WW I
- While he was in the trenches he kept illustrated journals of his experiences
- Pippin left school when he was 14 to provide financially for his family
- The farmer Pippin worked for offered to send him to art school after seeing a sketch Pippin had done of him while he was sleeping. Pippin was unable to go because his mother was sick.
- He was wounded, discharged and left with a partially paralyzed right arm
- In order to paint he had to support his fairly useless right arm with his left arm
- He used small brush strokes because of his injured arm.
- His first large canvas was a protest against the war
- He painted scenes representing African American America
- Before becoming a painter he was a farm hand, coal unloader, hotel porter, feed store assistant, and furniture loader
- When Pippin was in elementary school he won a contest in a magazine for drawing. He won watercolors and crayons, which he used to draw scenes from the Bible.
- Pippin and his wife died within 2 weeks of each other.

Key Principle of Design to Teach

- **Balance**, often referred to as visual weight, describes the relationships between different elements of a work of art in terms of their size and location. The balance of an artwork can be used to help create a visual harmony or tension within the piece. In art "nothing" can balance "something." Balance is achieved by arranging art elements in the artwork so that no one part overpowers, or seems heavier than, any other part. Symmetry and asymmetry are part of balance. Symmetry is the relationship of one or more groups of elements so that they are identical from side to side. Asymmetry is a part of balance where the elements are evenly weighted visually, but they are not the same.

Possible Questions and Suggestions to Teach Balance

- Where would you divide this painting to make two equal halves?

- Are the halves exactly equal?
- Do you see any differences?
Cover up the right or left side of this painting? Can you guess what's on the other side? Point out it's almost exactly the same. We call this symmetry.
- Fold a paper in half and cut out an object like a butterfly (see packet). Using a q-tip, put dots of paint on one side and then close the wings to show how it repeats it on the opposite side making it symmetrical. Open and repeat with other colors. Hint: don't put all of the colors of paint on at once or it may start to dry out and not transfer as well.

Keywords

- Balance, color, shape, pattern

Other Possible Questions and Suggestions

- What room in a house does this look like?
- What do you see in this room?
- Does it look modern or old-fashioned?
- Does it look like an adult or a child painted it?
- What is in the paintings on the wall?
- What's on the floor?
- What colors do you see in this painting? Are they bright or dull? What color do you see the most? What color is the wall?
- Do any of these items appear in your living room?
- What shapes do you see in this painting?